

Vincenzo Toschi in
A nation collapses : the Italian surrender of September 1943
by Aga Rossi, Elena
Publication date 2000

Page 86

During the inquest conducted by Mario Palermo, a heated controversy arose about these two memoranda, one written by Roatta and the other by the Supreme Command. Carboni delivered a document to the Commission of Inquiry, contending that it was a copy of the text sent to Castellano on September 6, which had been given him by the Supreme Command. The document differs in style but is very similar in substance to the one located in Castellano's papers, which requested a delay in the announcement of the armistice to a few days after "the attack by six divisions in the Salerno—Naples area." Carboni's testimony, if accepted, would have proved that the Italians were aware already on September 9 of the place of landing. The authenticity of the document was denied by Ambrosio and Roatta, who stated that it had been fabricated in order to discredit the Supreme Command. In the first instance Castellano and Rossi recognized the note as authentic. However, a few weeks later they asked the Commission to hear them again and denied knowing on September 6 that the landing was to be on the coast of Campania, near Naples." It is probable that the text Carboni submitted was the memorandum Roatta had prepared the evening of the 6th, which is confirmed by the testimony of Colonel Vincenzo Toschi, who reported directly to Carboni. Carboni told the Commission of Inquiry that he recognized the document, written in Roatta's hand and typed by him on the evening of the 6th. Toschi also recalled that the text mentioned the landing area of Salerno—Naples and added an illuminating point: "Further, there had been a great deal of discussion about the Salerno-Naples landing, especially after the landing in Calabria." !

Page 164

Transcript of the interrogation of Colonel Vincenzo Toschi, March 4, 1945, published in Palermo, *Storia di un armistizio*, pp. 364-66. Ambrosio justified himself before the Commission of Inquiry by stating that he did not know about the arrival of the Allied officers. His false testimony was supported by Colonel De Francesco, according to whom Ambrosio had left for Turin without knowing of General Taylor's arrival ("Verbale dell'interrogatorio del ten. colonnello De Francesco," in. AUSSME, *Diario storico*, Castellano, cart. 2999). Actually, Ambrosio knew of Taylor's mission and was the one who organized it. According to de Courten's testimony, Ambrosio asked him to send two motor torpedo boats to meet two British officials and transport them to Rome ("Appunti da me tracciati").